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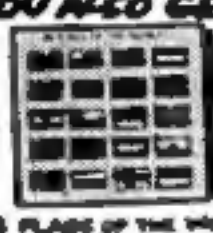
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RAIDER ALERT!

MAYBE THE WAR GODS LOOKED DOWN FROM VALHALLA THAT APRIL DAY IN 1942, SEEKING AMUSEMENT AMID THE SMOKE AND KILLING OF THE TIME. IF SO, IT WAS THEN THAT THEY ESPIED THE LITTLE ANTI-AIRCRAFT UNIT ON THE CORNISH COAST. BUT THE BOFORS CREW ON WHOM THE GRIM JOKE WAS TO BE PLAYED DID NOT HEAR THE GHOULISH LAUGHTER ...

WHO SAYS WE
CAN'T HIT ANYTHING--
HOW'S THAT FOR
SHOOTING, THEN?



Chapter 1. Confused Orders

THE LONE GUN-CREW, FAR FROM THE BATTLEFIELDS WHERE THE FATE OF THE WORLD WAS IN THE BALANCE, SAW THE PLANE LURCH AND RECOVER. SERGEANT 'TUBBY' AMBERS YELLED FRESH ORDERS TO THE LADERS.



ANOTHER CLIP OF SHELLS PAT SKYWARDS. SUDDENLY THE PLANE SPIRALLED TO THE SEA. DUSTY MILLER WIPED HIS FOREHEAD.

GOOD SHOOTING, LADS!

THEY WON'T CALL US 'THE SHOWER' TONIGHT WHEN WE GO DOWN TO THE VILLAGE.

THE TRUTH IS WE **ARE** A SHOWER. WE'VE BEEN HERE TWELVE MONTHS AND SIXTEEN DAYS -- AND EVEN NOW IT'S ONLY A FLUKE WE HIT THAT JERRY.



THE OTHERS LOOKED UNEASY AS RESPECTACLED PERCY PERRIN SPOKE.

WHY KID OURSELVES? WE ALL KNOW THE ARMY'S CLEAN FORGOTTEN WE WERE EVER SENT HERE.

IF THE ARMY'S MISLAID US, IT'S THEIR LOOK OUT, PERCE.

TUBBY AMBERS WINCED. PERCY WAS RIGHT. THEY DREW THEIR PAY AND RATIONS FROM A NEIGHBOURING DEPOT. YET SOMEHOW THEIR OWN DISTANT H.Q. HAD OVERLOOKED THE VERY EXISTENCE OF THE BOFORS CREW.

THE TROUBLE WITH YOU LOT IS DISCIPLINE'S TOO SLACK. WHAT'S THE IDEA TURNING UP ON THE GUN-SITE IN FOOTBALL TOGS, DUSTY? AND YOU, TOSH, LOOK AT THE STATE YOU'RE IN...

DO ME A FAVOUR, TUBBY.. BELT UP, WILL YOU, MATE?

Raider Alert!

TOSH PARKER, BOFORS GUN-LAYER FROM BERMONDSEY, GENIAL WIDE-BOY AND NUMBER ONE SCROUNGER OF THE UNIT, EASED HIMSELF INTO A COMFORTABLE ARMCHAIR IN THEIR COSY BILLET.

I RECKON WE MADE A MISTAKE BRINGING THAT PLANE DOWN. AREA COMMAND MAY REALISE WE'RE STILL HERE, HAVING IT CUSHY...

I HOPE THEY DO, TOSH. I'M SICK OF IT HERE!

WITHIN TWENTY-FOUR HOURS, TOSH'S PROPHECY WAS BEING FULFILLED. THE AREA COMMANDER HEARD FOR THE FIRST TIME ABOUT THE DOINGS OF SERGEANT TUBBY AMBERS AND HIS CREW.

I DON'T REMEMBER HAVING A BOFORS ON THE CLIFFS AT ROCKYMOUTH. THEY SHOT DOWN A PLANE? SPLENDID... AND THE CREW WAS PICKED UP... WHAT WAS THAT? IT WAS AN R.A.F. PLANE?

COMMAND H.Q. VIBRATED TO THE FURY OF THE GENERAL. UNIT RECORDS FOR THE PAST TWO YEARS WERE UNEARTHED AND, AT LAST, THE OFFICIAL EXISTENCE OF THE FORGOTTEN BOFORS CREW WAS DISCOVERED.

I'LL HAVE SOMEBODY'S BLOOD FOR THIS!
AND AS FOR SERGEANT AMBERS AND HIS
BUNCH OF IDIOTS, FIX 'EM WITH A POSTING
WHERE THEY'LL BE ON COOKHOUSE FATIGUES
FOR THE REST OF THE WAR!

YES, SIR!



THE GENERAL'S DEMAND THAT TUBBY AND HIS MEN BE SHIFTED WAS TRANSLATED INTO A MOVEMENT ORDER TO BE TYPED ON AN OFFICIAL FORM. IT SHARED PRIORITY WITH THE LATEST BATCH OF TOP SECRET DOCUMENTS.



Raider Alert!

THE SECURITY CORPORAL BLINKED WEARILY AT HIS WORK -- THERE WAS AN OPERATIONAL ORDER FOR A SELECT COMBAT GROUP, A REQUISITION FOR A NEW TYPE COMPASS, AND A MOVEMENT ORDER REMOVING SERGEANT TUBBY AMBERS' UNIT FROM CORNWALL TO A COOKHOUSE IN THE CATERING SECTION.

IT'S MY APPENDIX PLAYING UP, SIR -- I GOT NO SLEEP LAST NIGHT.

IF YOU'RE GOING TO FLAKE OUT, GIVE ME THE PAPERS YOU'VE TYPED, AND LET ONE OF THE OTHER BLOKES DO THE REST.

IMPATIENTLY, THE GENERAL SIGNED THE TYPED ORDERS LAID BEFORE HIM. HIS CAR HAD BEEN WAITING NEARLY HALF-AN-HOUR TO TAKE HIM TO AN IMPORTANT WAR OFFICE CONFERENCE.

THAT'S THAT! MAKE SURE THE COMBAT GROUP IS SPEEDED ON ITS PARTICULAR MISSION. INFORM ALL THOSE INVOLVED THAT THE GROUP'S CODEWORD WILL BE 'CRUNCH'.

VERY GOOD, SIR, CRUNCH!

NEXT DAY, A DISPATCH RIDER FROM COMMAND H.Q. PULLED UP OUTSIDE THE COTTAGE BILLET OF SERGEANT TUBBY AMBERS AND HIS BOFORS UNIT.

SOME BLOKES HAVE IT EASY. HERE'S A MESSAGE FROM H.Q.

HAND IT OVER, SON, AND NOT SO MUCH LIP!



SHAKEN AT GETTING AN ORDER FROM H.Q. AFTER SO LONG, TUBBY READ IT TWICE -- AND IT STILL PUZZLED HIM.

IT LOOKS LIKE WE'VE GOT OUR MARCHING ORDERS AT LAST. WE REPORT TO THE R.T.O. AT BRIDGETON TOMORROW MORNING -- WITH FULL KIT.

SO THIS IS THE END OF OUR LIFE OF EASE -- IT'LL DO US ALL A POWER OF GOOD!



TUBBY HAD NO SUCCESS WHEN HE TRIED TO SMARTEN THEM UP FOR THEIR JOURNEY. THE RAILWAY TRANSPORT OFFICER AT BRIDGETON LOOKED SHOCKED WHEN HE SAW THEM.

YOU MUST BE THE E.N.S.A. COMICS WE'RE EXPECTING?



NO, SIR! WE'RE AN A.A. DETACHMENT IN TRANSIT-- HERE'S OUR MOVEMENT ORDER!

THE R.T.O.'S MANNER CHANGED THE MOMENT HE SAW THEIR TRAVEL WARRANT AND THE ORDERS ACCOMPANYING IT.

OH, I SEE! THAT'S DIFFERENT, SERGEANT! I'VE HAD SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS FROM AREA H.Q. ABOUT YOUR PARTY. PLEASE COME THIS WAY, GENTLEMEN!

WHAT'S THE MATTER WITH HIM? HE'S TREATING US LIKE V.I.P.s!



THEY FOUND A HANDSOME STAFF CAR AWAITED THEM IN THE CAR PARK, WITH A LANCE-CORPORAL CHAUFFEUR IN ATTENDANCE.



AS THE FOUR GUNNERS WERE DRIVEN AWAY, THE R.T.O. SIGHED ENVIOSLY. HE WISHED THAT HIS OWN PART IN THE WAR WAS MORE EXCITING THAN A DULL ROUND OF STATION DUTIES.



BACK IN HIS STATION OFFICE, THE R.T.O. FOUND ANOTHER GROUP OF SOLDIERS HAD REPORTED TO HIM FOR SPECIAL TRAVEL WARRANTS -- AND HE HAD NEVER SEEN A MORE DEADLY, RUTHLESS-LOOKING BUNCH!



MEANWHILE, TUBBY AND HIS GUN-CREW WERE DRIVEN DOWN SECONDARY ROADS AND BYWAYS TO A REMOTE R.A.F. STATION.



THEIR LANCE-CORPORAL CHAUFFEUR TOOK THEM TO THE ORDERLY-ROOM...

THIS IS AN R.A.F. STATION, CHUM. NOT A RUBBISH DUMP -- YOU CAN TAKE THAT SHOWER RIGHT OUT OF HERE!

THERE'S MY ORDERS -- I HAVE TO DELIVER 'EM PERSONALLY TO YOUR C.O.



AS THE RELUCTANT ORDERLY LOOKED AT THEM, THE WING-COMMANDER STRODE FROM THE INNER ROOM.

THESE ARE THE CHAPS YOU'RE EXPECTING, SR-- CODWORD CRUNCH, WHATEVER THAT MEANS!

GOOD GRIEF! I WAS EXPECTING FOUR TOUGH-LOOKING CUSTOMERS -- BUT THESE FELLOWS LOOK LIKE SCARECROWS!



STILL UNABLE TO CONCEAL HIS SURPRISE, THE WING-COMMANDER ESCORTED THE FOUR GUNNERS TO A DESERTED MESS, WHERE THEY FOUND A MEAL HAD BEEN PREPARED FOR THEM.

I ANTICIPATED YOU MIGHT WANT A GOOD MEAL BEFORE YOU LEFT. THE ARMY NEVER TELLS ME ANYTHING ABOUT THE TRIPS YOU FELLOWS MAKE, BUT YOU CAN BE SURE WE'LL SEE YOU GET THERE SAFELY.



THEN WE'RE NOT STAYING HERE?

THE WING-COMMANDER SHOOK HIS HEAD.

PITY!
I COULD SETTLE
DOWN HERE FOR
LIFE!

THE WEATHER'S JUST
RIGHT. WE HAD SPECIAL
ORDERS AN HOUR AGO NOT
TO DELAY YOUR TRIP. SO
YOU'LL BE OFF AND AWAY
TONIGHT.



AFTER THEIR MEAL, ANOTHER R.A.F. N.C.O. LED THEM TO TEMPORARY QUARTERS. BUT IT SEEMED ONLY A FEW MINUTES BEFORE HE WAS BACK...

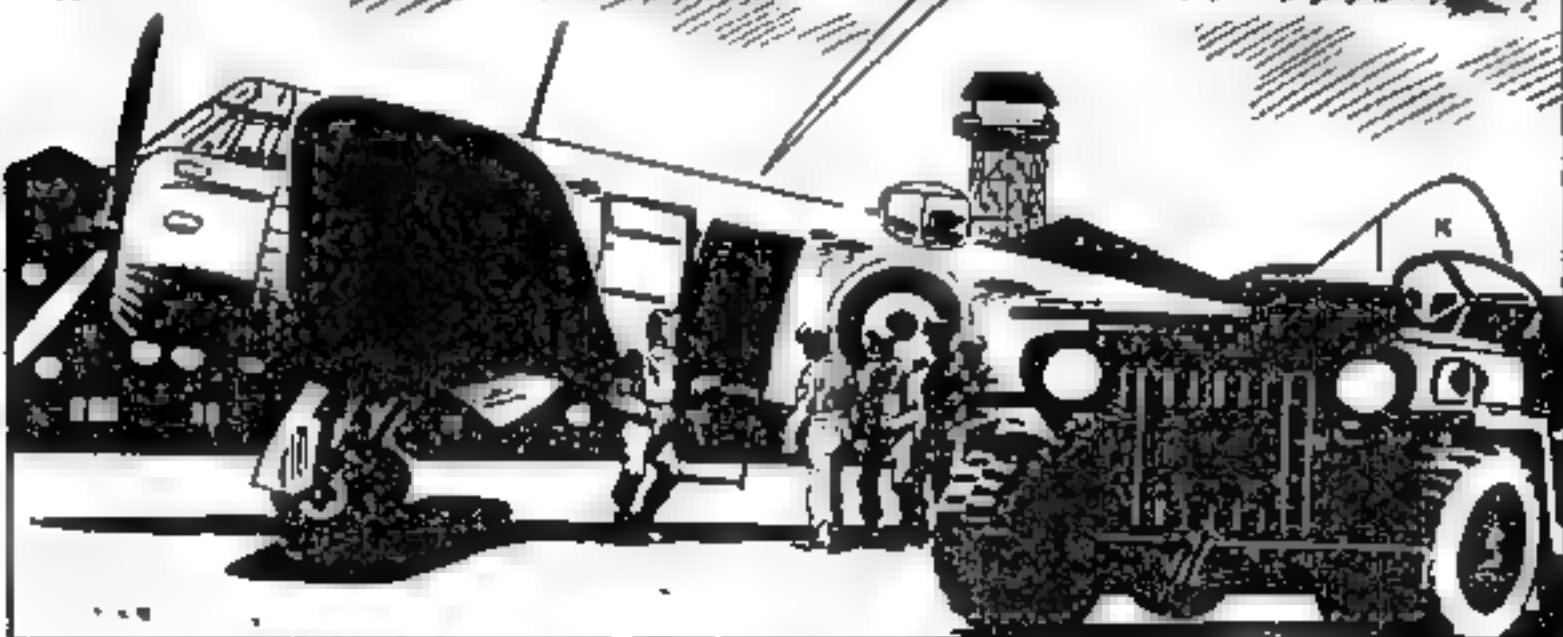
GET YOUR KIT
TOGETHER, FELLOWS!
IT'S TIME TO GO—THE
PLANE'S WAITING
FOR YOU ON THE
AIRFIELD!

THE MORE
I THINK ABOUT
THIS, THE MORE
I THINK THERE'S
SOME MISTAKE...



BUT THE R.A.F. HAD NO TIME TO LISTEN TO TUBBY'S MISGIVINGS. HE AND HIS CREW WERE HUSTLED INTO A JEEP AND TUMBLED OUT ON THE AIRFIELD.

OKAY, CHAPS! ALL THE KIT YOU'RE TO TAKE HAS BEEN CHECKED ABOARD



ABOARD THE PLANE, THEY TRIED TO SNATCH SOME SLEEP AS BEST THEY COULD... ALL EXCEPT TUBBY, WHO WAS GETTING WORRIED...

WHAT'S OUR DESTINATION, CHUM?

THE AREA YOU CHAPS ALWAYS USE. BUT THE RECEPTION COMMITTEE HAVE MADE A NEW LANDING STRIP TO THE NORTH AND WE'RE TAKING SOME FELLOWS BACK WITH US.



THE FOUR OF THEM WOKE WITH A START WHEN THE PLANE BUMPED TO A LANDING, AND THE SOFT BUT URGENT VOICE OF THE PILOT TOLD THEM TO MAKE IT SNAPPY.

WHAT, NO
BAND TO
WELCOME
US?

YOU COMMANDO
TYPES ARE
ALWAYS MAKING
CRACKS. BUT
KEEP YOUR VOICES
DOWN--REMEMBER
YOU'RE IN
OCCUPIED FRANCE
NOW!

TUBBY AND THE GUNNERS
STARED AT THE PILOT,
THEIR JAWS DROPPING,
WONDERING IF THEIR EARS
WERE DECEIVING THEM.

O-DID
YOU SAY
OCCUPIED
FRANCE?

OF COURSE. HERE'S THE
LOCAL MAQUIS LEADER,
BRUNO BLANC. GOOD LUCK
ON YOUR OPERATION
CRUNCH, AND DON'T GET
CAUGHT BY THE GESTAPO.
I'VE GOT TO HOP BACK
TO ENGLAND NOW.



Chapter 2. *Operation GRUNCH*

IN THE COMMAND H.Q. WHERE THE PLAN FOR CRUNCH HAD BEEN SET IN MOTION, A SECURITY SERGEANT CHECKED THROUGH A TOP SECRET FILE OF THE MOST RECENT ORDERS SENT OUT UNDER SIGNATURE OF THE GENERAL.

THE GENERAL SIGNED 'EM! ANYWAY, I'VE JUST GOT THE REPORT CRUNCH HAS STARTED!

EVEN WALLS HAVE EARS

I'VE FOUND THE COPIES OF THE CRUNCH ORDER THAT CORPORAL DIXON TYPED BEFORE GOING SICK. BUT THIS DOESN'T LOOK RIGHT. COULD DIXON HAVE MIXED THE ORDERS?



AT THAT MOMENT, THE NIGHT WIND WAS MOANING A CHILLY MESSAGE TO THE FOUR BRITISH TROOPS THAT THE ENGLAND-BOUND PLANE WAS LEAVING BEHIND. SERGEANT TUBBY AMBERS, YELLING AFTER THE PILOT, WAS GRABBED BY BRUNO BLANC.

STOP THAT PLANE -- WE'VE GOT TO GET BACK ON IT!

I DO NOT SPIK MOOCH ENGLISH -- BUT SHUT UP! LES BOCHES ARE NEAR!



TLBBY TRED IN VAIN TO EXPLAIN THAT THEY WERE THE WRONG MEN FOR THIS RAIDING JOB. ONLY PERCY PERRIN WAS ENJOYING THE SITUATION.

YOU SPEAK THE LINGO, PERCY -- TELL THIS BLOKE THAT FOR ALL WE KNOW ABOUT IT, CRUNCH MIGHT BE JUST ANOTHER BREAKFAST CEREAL!

BRUNO SAYS GET DISGUISED AND GET CRACKING -- OR WE'RE ALL DEAD DUCKS!



THERE WAS NO TIME TO ARGUE. SWIFTLY THEY SLIPPED THE CIVILIAN CLOTHING OVER THEIR UNIFORMS AND WITHIN SECONDS THEY WERE ON THEIR WAY.

HE'S TAKING US TO A HIDE-OUT. OH, BOY, WE'RE IN THE WAR AT LAST!

FIRST CHANCE, GET, MATE, I'M SENDING A STRONG COMPLAINT TO THE WAR OFFICE!



A GREY DAWN BROKE AS THEY RODE AFTER BRUNO -- A DAWN THAT SILHOUETTED MOVING MEN ON THE BROW OF THE HILL.

PSSST-- LES ALLEMANDS! WE HAVE DELAYED TOO LONG!



AT WHISPERED ORDERS FROM BRUNO, TRANSLATED BY PERCY, THEY DITCHED THEIR BIKES AND TOOK COVER BY THE SIDE OF THE ROAD...

IT'S AN S.S. PATROL! BRUNO SAYS OUR ONLY CHANCE IS TO LOSE 'EM IN THE WOODS.



Raider Alert!

THEY STUMBLLED THROUGH BRACKEN AND UNDERGROWTH. TUBBY, PUFFING ALONG IN THE REAR, WONDERED ANXIOUSLY HOW LONG HE COULD KEEP UP THIS GRUELLING TREK.



WHICH WAY DID THEY GO? I CAN'T HEAR THEM...OR THE GERMANS EITHER. MAYBE I COULD SPOT THE PATH THEY TOOK IF I CLIMBED A TREE.

ACHING IN EVERY JOINT FROM THE EFFORT, TUBBY CLIMBED -- AND A SHOCK AWAITED HIM.



THE PATROL -- IT'S COMING THIS WAY! I'VE GOT TO GET HIGHER AMONG THE LEAVES.

IN HIS AGITATION HE CRASHED INTO THE BRANCH ABOVE HIM, AND DID NOT SEE THE PATROL SKIRT THE GLADE AND MAKE OFF THROUGH THE TREES.

OUCH!

WHAT WAS THAT?
IT DID NOT SOUND
LIKE A BIRD!



TUBBY SWAYED AND GRABBED FOR A BRANCH, BUT HIS CLUTCHING HAND MET AIR...

THAT SOUND AGAIN-- I WILL FIRE A SHOT TO RECALL THE PATROL!



TUBBY FELL, AND THE GERMAN CAPTAIN'S ONE LAST CONSCIOUS THOUGHT WAS THAT SOMEHOW HE HAD BEEN BOMBED.



TUBBY GROANED AND ROLLED OFF THE CRUMPLED GERMAN. HIS FIRST THOUGHT WAS TO APOLOGISE FOR HIS CLUMSINESS.

GEE, HE'S OUT FOR THE COUNT-- I'D BETTER GET HIS GUN BEFORE HIS PATROL COMES BACK.

THIS WAY, CHAPS--I'VE FOUND TUBBY.



THE FUGITIVES GATHERED ROUND TUBBY WITH NEW RESPECT.

BRUNO SAYS HE SALLUTES YOU FOR YOUR FINE OFFENSIVE SPIRIT, SARGE. YOU'VE MADE QUITE A HIT WITH HIM.

EH. WHAT, ..? I DIDN'T MEAN TO BE OFFENSIVE..



BRUNO LED THEM IN A WIDE CIRCUIT TO A BARREN HILLSIDE, AND THERE THEY WERE GREETED BY HIS MAQUIS FRIENDS.



THEY WERE TAKEN TO A WELL-HIDDEN CAVE, STOCKED WITH ASSORTED WAR SUPPLIES. PERCY ACTED AS INTERPRETER.



BRUNO LEFT THE BRITISH TO AN ARGUMENT HE DID NOT UNDERSTAND.

I'M IN CHARGE HERE, PERCY. AND I'M NOT ALLOWING ANY OF YOU TO GO ON THAT RAID. PUDDENHEADS LIKE YOU COULD LOSE US THE WAR.

DEAD RIGHT, TUBBY. PERCY'S GETTING ABOVE HIMSELF!



PERCY GAVE AN EXCLAMATION OF DISGUST, AND BROKE OPEN ONE OF THE BOXES OF WAR STORES, DROPPED BY PLANE FROM ENGLAND.

YOU LOT CAN SKULK IN HERE AND WAIT FOR THE NEXT PLANE HOME. I'LL MAKE EXCUSES TO BRUNO FOR YOU. BUT I'M GOING ON THIS OPERATION!



OUTSIDE, BRUNO EXPLAINED TO PERCY IN STACCATO FRENCH THE PURPOSE OF CRUNCH AND THE LIE OF THE LAND.

THAT IS A SPECIAL GERMAN ESTABLISHMENT, M'SIEUR PERCY, WHERE DISTINGUISHED FRENCH AND ENGLISH PRISONERS ARE KEPT. BEFORE WE RAID IT, WE MUST CAPTURE THE S.S. GENERAL WHO COMMANDS IT. OUR PLANS ARE READY-- COME !



THAT AFTERNOON, TUBBY WATCHED AS PERCY AND BRUNO LED A MAQUIS SQUAD DOWN THE HILLSIDE.

PERCY WILL GET INTO TROUBLE FOR SURE IT'S MADNESS -- A CHAP GOING RAIDING WHO CAN'T EVEN WASH UP WITHOUT BREAKING SOME CROCKS MAYBE, I'D BETTER TAG ALONG, TOO



THE RAIDERS TOOK COVER AT THE EDGE OF THE WINDING MOTOR-ROAD.

HERE IT COMES! THAT IS THE CAR OF THE S.S. GENERAL KREUGER. WE MUST CAPTURE HIM AND THE CAR. KEEP UNDER COVER UNTIL I HAVE STOPPED THEM.



BRUNO LEFT HIS TOMMY-GUN WITH THE OTHERS AND CLAMBERED DOWN TO THE ROAD. HE STOOD, AS THE CAR ROARED UP, WAVING HIS ARMS FRANTICALLY.



AS THE CHAUFFEUR CALLED OUT, BRUNO PULLED A PISTOL FROM INSIDE HIS JACKET.



KREIDER, HIS EYES GLITTERING WITH FURY, GOT DOWN FROM THE CAR AT BRUNO'S COMMAND.

HURRY UP, BRUNO--THERE'S MORE TRAFFIC COMING THIS WAY!

THAT WILL BE OUR PATROL OF S.S. MOTOR-CYCLISTS!



THE MOTOR-CYCLE PATROL CAME THUNDERING ALONG THE ROAD JUST AS TUBBY REACHED THE RIM OF THE HILL ABOVE THE PASS. THE MAQUIS OPENED UP AT THE GERMAN MOTOR-CYCLISTS AS SOON AS THEY CAME WITHIN RANGE.

THEY'RE CRAZY! THE JERRIES WON'T LET THEM GET AWAY WITH THIS!



TRAINED FOR SUDDEN EMERGENCY ACTION, THE PATROL SWERVED FOR COVER OFF THE ROAD, AND THEIR SCHMEISSERS SPAT DEATH AT THE MAQUIS.



FOR A MOMENT PERCY WAS PARALYSED BY THE SUDDENNESS OF IT ALL. THEN HE BEGAN TO FIRE BACK INTO THE TEETH OF THE MURDEROUS GERMAN ASSAULT.



BRUNO YELLED ORDERS AS HE SAW HIS NEWLY RECRUITED MAQUIS MEN, NOVICES IN BATTLE, BEGIN TO WAVER AND BREAK.

IF I KILL
THEIR LEADER
THEY WILL BE
HELPLESS.


SPREAD
OUT, MAQUIS...
AAAAGH!

AS BRUNO PITCHED AND LAY STILL IN THE DUST, THE MELEE BECAME A NIGHTMARE FOR PERCY. HE SAW BRUNO'S VILLAGE RECRUITS WERE, PETRIFIED AT THE SUDDEN LOSS OF THEIR LEADER.

WE'RE DONE
FOR IF WE RUN
THE S.S. WILL
JUST MOW US
DOWN!

AS THE WHINING BULLETS OF THE GERMANS WHIPPED PAST THE MAQUIS, GENERAL KREUGER SLIPPED INTO HIS CAR AND DROVE OFF. PERCY'S DESPAIR TURNED SUDDENLY TO FIERCE BITTERNESS.

DOES BRUNO
DIE IN VAIN ---
EN AVANT, MAQUIS!



CLENCHING HIS TEETH AGAINST HIS OWN RISING FEAR, PERCY ROSE INTO THE BULLET STORM AND SPRAYED THE ADVANCING S.S. TROOPS...

FOLLOW HIM
AND AVENGE
BRUNO!



TUBBY, ON THE RIM OF THE HILL, STARED WITH DISBELIEVING EYES AT THE CARNAGE BELOW HIM. DAZED, HE FELT FOR THE GUN HE HAD CAPTURED WHEN HE FELL FROM THE TREE.

I'VE GOT TO
LEND PERCY
A HAND...



PERCY WENT DOWN THE SLOPE AT A SHAMBLING RUN. HE HAD TORN A GAP IN THE ATTACK, BUT THE S.S. MEN WERE REGROUPING.

COME ON -- WE'VE
GOT TO HIT 'EM
BEFORE THEY
RECOVER!



PERCY'S SPUR-OF-THE-MOMENT ATTACK INSPIRED THE MAQUIS RECRUITS. THEN, IN THE MOMENT OF THEIR VICTORY, A CHANCE BULLET HIT PERCY...


WE HAVE THEM NOW -- VIVE LA FRANCE!



SCRAMBLING DOWN THE ROCKS, TUBBY REACHED THE BATTLE AS IT ENDED -- ONLY TWO GERMANS ESCAPED. PERCY DIED EVEN AS TUBBY KNELT BESIDE HIM.

WE HAVE WON THIS BATTLE, BUT OUR CAUSE IS LOST. OUR LEADER BRUNO AND YOUR BRAVE FRIEND ARE DEAD.

YOU WERE A BETTER MAN THAN I AM, PERCE. BUT I PROMISE I'LL CARRY ON FROM WHERE YOU LEFT OFF...



Chapter 3. Reluctant Fighters

MEANWHILE, COMMAND H.Q. IN ENGLAND, THE NERVE CENTRE OF THE CRUNCH OPERATION, WAS UNDERGOING ITS WORST FLAP SINCE THE BEGINNING OF THE WAR.

YOU CHAPS SAY **YOU** SHOULD HAVE BEEN SENT ON CRUNCH.. BUT YOU WERE TRANSFERRED TO A CATERING CORP UNIT INSTEAD? WHEN THE GENERAL KNOWS THIS HE'LL GO SKY-HIGH!

IN WALLS
EARS



THAT EVENING, IN THE CAVE H.Q. OF THE SLD LORENT MAQUIS, DUSTY MILLER AND TOSH PARKER WERE LEARNING THAT THEIR TEAM OF FOUR HAD BECOME THREE.

SO YOU RECKON NOW PERCY HAS GOT HIMSELF KILLED, YOU'VE GOT TO GO AND DO THE SAME THING, TUB?

YOU DIDN'T SEE PERCY KILLED --OR YOU'D FEEL LIKE I DO, ANYWAY. I DON'T NEED ANY HELP FOR THIS JOB. TWO MAQUIS TYPES ARE JOINING ME.



TOSH AND DUSTY WERE SHAKEN. THEY HAD NEVER SEEN TUBBY ACTING THIS WAY BEFORE.

TUBBY'S GONE BONKERS! HOW CAN HE CARRY OUT A COMMANDO RAID. WE'VE GOT TO STOP HIM, DUSTY!



AT THAT MOMENT THEY WERE STARTLED BY A SINGLE STACCATO SHOT FROM THE MAQUIS SENTRY POSTED ON A HIGH LOOK-OUT POINT.

LES BOCHES! AUX ARMES!



ADVANCING UP THE VALLEY SLOPE TOWARDS THEM WAS A STRONG PARTY OF S.S. TROOPS. THE EVENING SUN GLINTED ON THEIR BAYONETS AS THEY FANNED OUT.

GET YOUR GUNS --
IN TWO MINUTES THEY'LL
BE ON US!

YOU'RE RIGHT --
WE'VE GOT TO
GET OUT OF
HERE, *FAST!*

TUBBY FELT SICK WITH TENSION, AND HIS HANDS TREMBLED AS THE BULLETS WHINED AND CRACKED AGAINST THE ROCKS OVERHEAD.

COME ON --
WE'LL MAKE
FOR THAT RIDGE!

IF THE MAQUIS
CAN DO IT, I CAN,
TOO!



IT WAS CLEAR THAT THE GERMANS MEANT TO PRESS HOME THEIR SURPRISE ATTACK AND WIPE OUT THIS NEST OF MAQUIS IN ONE SAVAGE RUSH.



TUBBY SAW MARCEL HURL A GRENADE. HE FUMBLER TO DO LIKEWISE, HIS UNSKILLED FINGERS CLUMSY ON THE PIN.

I'VE DONE IT --
AS GOOD AS
MARCEL! WHERE'S
MY TOMMY-GUN
GONE?



TUBBY REALISED WITH DULL AMAZEMENT
THAT HE WAS FIGHTING FOR HIS LIFE!



SOMEHOW HE FITTED A NEW
MAGAZINE TO HIS GUN. IT BUCKED,
JARRING HIS SHOULDER, AS IT
STUTTERED DEATH AT THE
YELLING GERMANS

THIS IS IT...
I WONDER HOW
TOSH AND DUSTY
ARE MAKING OUT



IT DID NOT OCCUR TO TUBBY THAT HIS TWO PALS WERE NOT FIRING FROM SOMEWHERE BEHIND THE ROCKS. AT THAT MOMENT, THEY WERE SCRAMBLING UP TO THE RIDGE WELL AWAY FROM THE BATTLE.

TUBBY'S NOT WITH US, TOSH... HE'S STAYED BEHIND!

THE CRAZY NIT -- WHAT GOOD DOES HE THINK HE CAN DO?

TOSH AND DUSTY REACHED THE RIDGE AND STARED AWE-STRIKEN AT THE BATTLE BENEATH THEM.

THEY'LL NEVER FIGHT OFF THAT LOT OF JERRIES! AND TUBBY'S IN THE THICK OF IT!

NOW THOSE JERRIES IN RESERVE ARE CREEPING ROUND. IF THEY GET AMONG THE ROCKS THEY'LL JUST CHOP OUR FELLOWS DOWN.



THE TWO PALS STARED AT EACH OTHER. THE FLANKING ATTACK WOULD BRING THE CIRCLING GERMANS RIGHT PAST THE TERRACED OUTCROP OF BOULDERS WHERE TOSH AND DUSTY CROUCHED.

I RECKON THIS IS OUR FIGHT, TOO, DUSTY.

YEAH. I SUPPOSE YOU'RE RIGHT, TOSH.



AS THE NEXT WAVE OF NAZIS SURGED UP THE HILL TO THE AID OF THE WILTING FIRST ATTACK THEY CAME UNDER TWO NEW BLASTS OF FIRE.



KEEP IT UP, DUSTY... WE'VE GOT TO GET OUR BLOKES OUT OF THIS HOLE.

TUBBY HAD LOST COUNT OF TIME AS THE SHOCK OF TOSH AND DUSTY'S AMBUSH STAGGERED THE ONCOMING WAVE OF G.S. MEN.

THE JERRIES ARE GIVING GROUND, MARCEL. SOME OF YOUR CHAPS HAVE CAUGHT THEM ON THE FLANK.

EET IS YOUR TOSH AND DUSTY!



FOR THE FIRST TIME, TOSH AND DUSTY KNEW WHAT IT WAS TO COME UNDER FIRE. THEY HEARD THE SPATTER OF BULLETS ON THE ROCKS AROUND THEM, AS THE NEAREST GERMANS SWITCHED THEIR ATTACK.

THEY'RE TRYING
FOR US NOW,
TOSH!

KRAUTS --
I HATE 'EM!



TOSH GRABBED UP HIS TOMMY-GUN AGAIN, HIS LIPS CURLED BACK IN A FROZEN SNARL. HE HAD NEVER FELT LIKE THIS BEFORE -- FIGHTING MAD!

MARCEL AND
TUBBY ARE GOING
FORWARD -- THEY'RE
ATTACKING!



GIMME
ANOTHER
MAG OF
AMMO.

THE MAQUIS RAISED A BLOOD-CURLING YELL AS MARCEL LED THE COUNTER-ATTACK. TUBBY, PANTING ALONGSIDE HIM, FELT A VICIOUS BLOW. IN THE MOMENT OF VICTORY, HE STAGGERED.



WHEN TUBBY REGAINED CONSCIOUSNESS, EVERYTHING WAS QUIET AND DARK...

WHAT
HAPPENED...
WHERE ARE WE?

WE BEAT OFF THE JERRIES.
BUT WE'VE GOT TO LIE LOW.
THEY'LL BE OUT IN FORCE FOR
US AFTER THIS. YOU'RE LUCKY,
TUB.... YOUR ARM'S NOT
BAD, AND A GRAZE ON YOUR
TEMPLE JUST KNOCKED
YOU OUT.



OUTSIDE THE FARMHOUSE TO WHICH THE MAQUIS HAD TREKKED AFTER THE BATTLE, TOSH THOUGHT OF THE DEAD THEY HAD BURIED. AND HIS NEW HATRED OF THE NAZIS STIRRED FIERCELY IN HIM AS HE TOOK OVER GUARD FROM MARCEL.



MARCEL'S LOW VOICE, FUMBLING FOR THE RIGHT ENGLISH WORDS, SUDDENLY HAD TOSH LISTENING CLOSELY.



MARCEL EXPLAINED, AND AS TOSH LISTENED, THE HARD STARE THAT HAD BEEN IN HIS EYES SINCE THE BURIAL PARTY, TOOK ON A NEW MEANING.

YESTERDAY, YOUR SERGEANT PLANNED THAT I AND ANOTHER OF OUR NUMBER WOULD DO THIS THING. BUT ZE THIRD MAN IS KILLED. I ALONE CANNOT DO CRUNCH -- THAT NEEDS THREE MEN.

US TWO AND ONE MORE COULD DO IT, EH? ALL RIGHT, MARCEL -- I'LL GET THE NEW THIRD MAN!



DUSTY, DEEP IN SLEEP IN THE RUINED FARM-HOUSE, THANKFUL THEY WERE STILL ALIVE AFTER THE CARNAGE OF THE EVENING, FOUND HIMSELF BEING SHAKEN AWAKE.

WASSA MATTER, TOSH? I JUST DREAMED I WAS BACK HOME ALL COSY AND SNUG.

FORGET THE DREAMS, DUSTY -- YOU AND ME ARE GOING ON A RAID. WE'VE GOT TO GET READY!



Chapter 4. Volunteer Prisoners!

THE G.O.C. OF THE AREA COMMAND IN ENGLAND, WHERE CRUNCH HAD BEEN PLANNED, WAS HAVING THE WORST SHOCK THE WAR HAD SO FAR DEALT HIM. HIS FACE WAS PURPLE WITH FURY.

AM I SURROUNDED WITH NINCOMPOOPS AND NITWITS? IF THE FOUR RAIDERS WHO SHOULD BE OUT IN FRANCE ARE STILL HERE -- WHO HAS BEEN SENT THERE?

I'M AFRAID IT'S AN ACK-ACK CREW, SIR -- THE CHAPS YOU WANTED PUT ON COOKHOUSE FATIGUES.



AT THAT MOMENT, DUSTY WAS VEHEMENTLY REFUSING TO BE PRESS-GANGED INTO TAKING PART IN THE RAID ON THE P.O.W.'S PRISON. BUT TOSH STILL HAD THAT FIERCE GLEAM IN HIS EYES.

YOU'RE ROUND THE BEND -- YOU CAN COUNT ME OUT OF CRUNCH.

ALL RIGHT. MARCEL CAN DO HIS END OF THE RAID, AND I'LL GET INTO THAT PRISON COMPOUND ON MY OWN!



WHILE TUBBY, HIS WOUND CLEANED AND BANDAGED, SLEPT THROUGH THE NEXT MORNING, DUSTY GLOOMILY WATCHED THE PREPARATIONS FOR THE RAID.

ZIS LORRY WILL COME ONE HOUR AFTER YOU HAVE ENTERED THE PRISON, M'SIEUR TOSH. I WILL BRING IT.

TOSH REALLY MEANS TO DO THIS ON HIS OWN!

THAT AFTERNOON, THE PLANS COMPLETED, TOSH WAS MAKING HIS WAY DOWN THE TRACK FROM THE WOOD, WHEN A VOICE HAILED HIM.

WAIT FOR ME, TOSH-- YOU CRAZY LOON!

GOODOH! I KNEW DUSTY WOULD COME ALONG IN THE END!

AS THEY NEARED THE ROAD, TOSH EXPLAINED THE PLAN TO DUSTY.

WE GET INTO THE P.O.W. BASE AS A COUPLE OF BRITISH PRISONERS FROM AN OUTSIDE WORKING PARTY. WE BLOW THE WALL AND TWO HUNDRED PRISONERS ESCAPE, WITH THE MAQUIS WAITING TO HELP THEM.

HAREBRAINED~~~
THAT'S WHAT
IT IS!

ALONG THE ROAD, A WORKING PARTY OF BRITISH P.O.W.'S. WERE FINISHING THEIR DAY'S LABOUR UNDER THE EYE OF AN ARMED GUARD.

NOW WHAT?

I GIVE TWO BIRD
CALLS AND TWO P.O.W.'S.
AMBLE OVER THIS WAY~~
THEN WE TAKE THEIR
PLACE. IT'S ALL FIXED.
KEEP YOUR GUN TUCKED
WELL IN YOUR BLOUSE.

TOM CLEARED HIS THROAT, CUPPED HIS HANDS TO HIS MOUTH, AND A SOUND LIKE AN OWL WITH WHOOPING-COUGH FLOATED TWICE IN THE STILL AFTERNOON AIR.

A BIRD? IT SOUNDS BIG -- BUT THAT IS STRANGE, I CANNOT SEE IT!



TWO OF THE PRISONERS BEGAN WORKING THEIR WAY NEAR THE CLUMP OF BUSHES FROM WHICH THE CALL HAD COME.

THE OTHER CHAPS ARE KEEPING THE GUARD'S ATTENTION OFF US -- HE'S NOT SEEN US GO YET!



A MOMENT LATER, THE TWO DECAMPING P.O.W.s. HAD ROUNDED THE BUSHES AND WERE MOMENTARILY OUT OF SIGHT OF THE GUARD. THEY CREETED TOSH AND DUSTY WITH PLEASURE.

HERE YOU ARE, MATEY--
ONE WHEELBARROW FOR
10' -- AND LIMP A BIT.
MOST OF US P.O.W.s
WERE WOUNDED



THE GERMAN GUARD BLEW A WHISTLE ANGRILY AS TOSH AND DUSTY CAME INTO VIEW IN PLACE OF THE TWO WITH WHOM THEY HAD MADE THE SWIFT CHANGE

NEXT TIME ANY OF
YOU PRISONERS WANDER
OFF, I SHOOT!

WE'RE OUT OF THE
PEN -- GEE, THEY'RE
COOL CUSTOMERS,
THOSE RAIDERS!



AN HOUR LATER, AS THE WORKING PARTY WAS MARCHED BACK TO THE PRISON, TOSH AND DUSTY WERE STILL UNDETECTED.

WELCOME TO THE GANG, CHUMS. WHEN WE'RE INSIDE DON'T ANSWER THE ROLL CALL -- TWO OF US WILL P.P.E UP FOR YOU.



THEY WERE MARCHED THROUGH THE PRISON GATE INTO A GENERAL COMPOUND, WHERE A BRUTAL LOOKING S.S. OFFICER WAITED, THE ROLL OF NAMES IN HIS HAND.

WE'LL NEVER MAKE IT, TOSH. WHOEVER THOUGHT OF CRUNCH WAS OFF HIS NUT!

SSSSSH! THEY'LL HEAR YOU!



AIDED BY THE OTHER P.O.W.s, TOSH AND DUSTY SUCCESSFULLY PASSED THE HAZARD OF DETECTION AT THE ROLL CALL, AND THE COLUMN BECAME A MEAL QUEUE. USING THE LINE AS A SCREEN, THE TWO RAIDERS MADE A BREAK TOWARDS A HUT ACROSS THE COMPOUND.

QUICK, THAT'S THE PLACE MARCEL MENTIONED. IT'S A SORT OF QUARTERMASTER'S STORES.

I'M SCARED STIFF...



REACHING FOR THE REVOLVERS HIDDEN IN THEIR BATTLEDRESS BLOUSES, THEY ENTERED THE STORE, WHERE A GERMAN CORPORAL WAS MAKING AN INVENTORY OF BARRACK REPLACEMENTS.

I'M BUSY -- YOU ENGLANDERS THINK YOU OWN THE PLACE. SHUT THE DOOR -- IT'S DRAUGHTY.

DO WHAT HE SAYS, DUSTY... HE'S A CORPORAL. AND LOCK IT, TOO.



THE GERMAN CORPORAL GOT ON WITH HIS LIST -- UNAWARE THAT ANYTHING WAS AMISS.

IF YOU TWO HAVE COME TO SCROUNGE SOME MORE CLOTHING AND BLANKETS FOR YOUR MATES, YOU'RE OUT OF LUCK. I'M STILL IN TROUBLE FROM THE LAST TIME HELPED YOU MEN OUT...

YOU CAN'T SHOOT A DECENT OLD BLOKE LIKE HIM!

TOSH COULD NOT AFFORD TO TAKE CHANCES. LIGHTLY HE RAPPED THE GERMAN ACROSS THE BACK OF THE HEAD WITH HIS REVOLVER.

HIMMEL!

SORRY, MATE, BUT I'M GOING TO SEND YOU TO BYE-BYES FOR A BIT...

DUSTY GAGGED AND BOUND THE UNCONSCIOUS GERMAN CORPORAL, WHILE TOSH RANSACKED THE STORE FOR THE BOXES MARCEL HAD MENTIONED...

MARCEL SAID THE EXPLOSIVE HAD BEEN HIDDEN HERE THREE WEEKS AGO. THERE'S A TRAP-DOOR IN THE FLOOR HERE SOMEWHERE.

THE AMATEUR RAIDERS ALMOST PULLED THE STOREROOM APART LOOKING FOR THE CONCEALED TRAP-DOOR. TOO LATE THEY HEARD A SOFT FOOTFALL AND THE CREAK OF AN OPENING DOOR.



THE S.S. CAPTAIN STEPPED TOWARDS THEM. THEN SUDDENLY, HORROR STAMPED ON HIS FACE, DISAPPEARED THROUGH A HOLE IN THE FLOOR, TO THE ACCOMPANIMENT OF SPLINTERING AND CRACKING.



THEY PULLED ASIDE THE REMAINS OF THE BROKEN TRAP-DOOR COVERING, AND SCRAMBLED IN THE WAKE OF THE FALLEN S.S. OFFICER...

HE'LL NEED MORE THAN SMELLING SALTS! WE CAN LEAVE HIM AND GRAB THOSE BOXES. BUT CAREFULLY, BECAUSE I DON'T KNOW WHAT SORT OF EXPLOSIVE IS IN 'EM.



ONE BY ONE THEY GOT THE BOXES OF EXPLOSIVES UP THE LADDER TO THE STOREROOM.

SOMEONE'S BANGING ON THE FRONT DOOR!

THEN COME ON--WE'VE GOT TO GET THESE BOXES OUT TO THE WEST WALL.



AS THE BANGING ON THE DOOR GREW LOUDER AND MORE ANGRY, THEY MADE OFF THROUGH THE REAR OF THE STORE TO ANOTHER EXIT, STAGGERING UNDER THEIR BURDEN.

YOU MEAN WE'VE GOT TO CROSS THAT SQUARE? WE'LL NEVER GET AWAY WITH THIS.

COME ON -- FOR ALL THAT ANY OF THESE JERRIES KNOW, WE'RE JUST ANOTHER P.O.W. FATIGUE PARTY.



THEY REACHED THE WALL AND, IN THE COMMOTION COMING FROM THE DIRECTION OF THE STOREROOM, THEY WERE ABLE TO FIND THE BEST SPOT TO LAY THEIR BURDEN WITHOUT INTERRUPTION, BUT THE OUTCRY WAS DANGEROUSLY NEAR...

I THINK THEY'VE FOUND THE STOREMAN WE TIED UP -- THE HUNT WILL BE UP ANY MINUTE.

THERE'S A PARCEL OF TRICKS TO SET OFF THE BIG BANG IN THAT OPEN BOX -- DON'T LEAVE IT BEHIND. WE'LL WANT IT WITH US.



AS QUICK AS THEY COULD THEY LAID THE WIRE FOR FIFTY HAZARDOUS YARDS FROM THE CHARGES THEY HAD BURIED NEAR THE GUARDROOM. WHEN THEY REACHED THE LEE OF A COOKHOUSE, TOSH MADE THE FINAL PREPARATIONS.

THE CONTRAPTION'S RIGGED. **DOWN** GOES THE PLUNGER AND **UP** GOES THE GUARDROOM AND THE WALL!



I HEAR NO BANG -- AND THE ~~GUARDROOM~~ STILL IN BUSINESS!

Chapter 5. Explosive Force!

BACK HOME IN ENGLAND, THE COMMAND H.Q. THAT HAD INTENDED TO KEEP REMOTE CONTROL OF CRUNCH BY RADIO WAS RECEIVING NO REPLIES TO ITS DESPERATE SIGNALS FOR INFORMATION.

NOTHING FROM OUR CRUNCH OPERATORS. BUT OUR MAN IN LORAIN SAYS THE GERMANS KNOW A RAID IS PLANNED -- THEY'VE EVEN CODE-NAMED IT, **TUBBY-TOSH**.

TUBBY-TOSH!
THE GENERAL
WILL GO BERSERK
ABOUT THIS!



AT THAT MOMENT, TOSH WAS UNSCREWING AND TESTING THE CONNECTIONS ON THE FIRER. THE TENSION WAS MAKING HIM NERVOUS AND PANICKY, BUT HE HAD NO IDEA WHY THERE HAD BEEN NO EXPLOSION.

HERE'S MARCEL -- AND
HE'S GOT THE TRUCK HE SAID
HE'D BRING.

IT'LL BE FULL
OF EXPLOSIVE TO BLOW
A GAP IN THE EAST
WALL -- BUT WE'VE GOT
TO EXPLODE THE
GUARDROOM
AS WELL!



MARCEL, AN EXPERT ON EXPLOSIVES, INSISTED ON STAYING TO SEE THEM THROUGH THEIR DIFFICULTIES. HE TOOK OVER THE PLUNGER WITH SWIFT EFFICIENCY.

I MAKE THIS WORK! YOU DRIVE THE TRUCK. IT IS A LOAD OF TOP-SOIL AND DRESSING FOR ZE GARDEN OF ZE GENERAL KREUGER. TAKE IT TO ZE EAST GATE. THERE I WILL JOIN YOU.



GUTTURAL SHOUTS CAME FROM ACROSS THE SQUARE AND AN ALARM SIREN SOUNDED IN THE DISTANCE AS TOSH AND DUSTY RAN FOR THE TIPPER-TRUCK.

MARCEL GOT THE TRUCK IN BY PRETENDING HE WORKED FOR THE LOCAL CONTRACTOR. BUT FROM NOW ON WE'LL HAVE TO SHOOT OUR WAY OUT OF TROUBLE.



LOOK, TOSH -- THERE'S SOMEONE IN THAT HEAP OF DIRT!

FROM THE TRUCK PARKED IN THE GARDEN OF GENERAL KREUGER, THE MILITARY GOVERNOR OF THE PRISON, A PLUMP FIGURE SLOWLY CRAWLED, COVERED STILL IN FERTILISER AND SOIL DRESSING



TUBBY!

WHO'D YOU THINK IT WAS -- BOADICEA? I KNEW YOU CHAPS WOULD MUCK UP THE SHOW. I SMUGGLED MYSELF IN TO TAKE CHARGE.

EVEN AS TUBBY SPOKE, A DEAFENING EXPLOSION SHOOK THE PRISON COMPOUND.

GOOD OLD MARCEL!
THAT'S THE WEST WALL
AND THE GUARDROOM
GONE UP.

NOW FOR THE EAST
WALL -- LET'S GET THIS
LORRY-LOAD OF
DYNAMITE IN PLACE!



DESPITE HIS INJURED ARM, TUBBY INSISTED ON DRIVING THE TRUCK. EVEN AS HE CLAMBERED BEHIND THE WHEEL, SHOTS WHISTLED AROUND THEM.

QUICK, TUBBY!
GET HER GOING
AND WE'LL JUMP
ON!



Raider Alert!

WINCING FROM THE PAIN IN HIS ARM, TUBBY FUMBLING INTO GEAR. BUT TO HIS HORROR, THE TRUCK SHOT BACKWARDS.



THE SUDDEN UPROAR FROM THE PRISON GROUNDS HAD BROUGHT GENERAL KREUGER HURRYING FROM AN UPSTAIRS CONFERENCE WITH HIS STAFF OFFICERS. HE HALTED, BOILING WITH RAGE AT WHAT HE SAW.



TUBBY STAGGERED, GROANING, FROM THE DRIVING SEAT. HE FELT HE HAD RUINED EVERYTHING, AND HARDLY CARED NOW IF HE FELL TO THE VENGEANCE OF THE S.S. BUT TOSH GRASPED HIS ARM.



THEY SAW DUSTY'S MILLS BOMB HURTLE THROUGH THE GENERAL'S WINDOW, AND THEN THEY RAN AS A STUTTERING MACHINE-GUN STARTED UP AND TRIED TO SEEK THEM OUT.



NEXT SECOND, GENERAL KREUGER'S HOUSE AND HEADQUARTERS BURST ASUNDER WITH AN EAR-SHATTERING DETONATION. THE THREE MEN FLUNG THEMSELVES TOWARDS COVER...

YOU'VE GOT TO HAND IT TO DUSTY. HE'S THE BOY TO MAKE THINGS GO WITH A BANG!

BUT IT'S ALL MY FAULT THE BANG WAS IN THE WRONG PLACE. IF I'D DRIVEN THAT TRUCK PROPERLY...



BUT AS THE THREE PALS FOUND OUT WHEN EVENING FELL, THE FINAL EXPLOSION HAD SERVED ITS PURPOSE. THE GARRISON'S OFFICERS HAD BEEN WIPE OUT, AND THE BADLY-SHOCKED GERMAN TROOPS WERE NO LONGER ABLE TO CONTROL THE SITUATION...

LOOK, TOSH -- THE POWS HAVE MANAGED TO GRAB ARMS. IT LOOKS AS IF THEY'VE FIRED THE ARSENAL!



THE RAIDERS, TOGETHER WITH SCORES OF P.O.W's. FOUND THE GAP IN THE WALL BLOWN BY MARCEL. ALREADY, MANY BRITISH AND FRENCH WERE MAKING FOR THE FRIENDLY COUNTRYSIDE... OTHERS WERE STAYING TO SETTLE ACCOUNTS WITH S.S. TROOPERS.



THE PRISON WELL BEHIND THEM, THE THREE RAIDERS MADE FOR THE TEMPORARY MAQUIS CAMP IN THE HILLS...

I HOPE MARCEL GOT AWAY ALL RIGHT. HE INSISTED WE SHOULD NOT TRY TO LINK UP AFTER THE EXPLOSIONS. HE RECKONED THERE WAS MORE CHANCE OF US GETTING AWAY INDEPENDENTLY.



IT WAS NEARLY MORNING BEFORE THEY REACHED CAMP--AND A BEAMING FIGURE STEPPED FROM UNDER THE TREES TO GREET THEM.

GOOD OLD MARCEL!

MES AMIS, ALREADY MANY FAMILIES OWE YOU THEIR THANKS FOR HELPING THEIR LOVED ONES TO ESCAPE FROM THE CLUTCHES OF THE BOCHE. SOON THERE WILL BE A PLANE TO TAKE YOU BACK TO ENGLAND!



IT WAS TWO DAYS LATER THAT THE THREE REFUGEES FROM A LONELY BOFORS SITE SAT IN A HOMEBOUND BRITISH PLANE WHILE MOONLIT FRANCE DROPPED BENEATH THEM. WITH THEM WERE SOME OF THE RESCUED P.O.Ws.

I'VE HAD ORDERS TO ESCORT YOU THREE PERSONALLY TO THE GENERAL AT AREA COMMAND H.Q. BETWEEN OURSELVES, THE GENERAL THINKS YOU'RE ALL STARK STARING MAD!



NEXT DAY, THEY WERE LINED UP TO ATTENTION BEFORE THE GENERAL HIMSELF.

I DON'T KNOW WHETHER TO GIVE YOU MEDALS FOR THE SPLENDID CHAOS YOU CAUSED IN THAT GERMAN GARRISON, OR TO HAVE YOU COURT-MARTIALLED FOR RUINING CRUNCH — AN OPERATION DESIGNED TO RESCUE TWENTY EXTREMELY DISTINGUISHED P.O.Ws. AT THE MOMENT THEY'RE LOST ALL OVER FRANCE.



THE GENERAL RUBBED HIS CHIN THOUGHTFULLY. SO FAR, THE WAR OFFICE HAD NOT SEEMED AT ALL UPSET ABOUT THE OUTCOME OF CRUNCH, AND HE FELT KINDLY DISPOSED TO THE THREE SURVIVORS OF THE RISKY MISSION.

ON THE WHOLE, I THINK I'LL LET YOU OFF WITH THREE WEEKS' SPECIAL LEAVE BEFORE YOU GO TO NEW POSTINGS.

THANK YOU, SIR!



IN THE ORDERLY ROOM, THE SAME CORPORAL WHO HAD INADVERTENTLY BEEN RESPONSIBLE FOR THE WHOLE AFFAIR, HANDED THEM LEAVE WARRANTS AND POSTING ORDERS.

I'M TO GO AS SERGEANT-MAJOR TO A CAMP OF GERMAN P.O.W.s. --YES, I CAN HANDLE THAT ALL RIGHT. WHERE ARE YOU CHAPS BOOKED FOR?



CORPORAL DIXON GRINNED AT THE AMATEUR RAIDERS. **THIS** TIME HE KNEW HE HAD TYPED THE RIGHT POSTINGS FOR THE RIGHT MEN.

WE'RE GOING FOR N.C.O. TRAINING BEFORE BEING POSTED TO A COMMANDO UNIT. THERE'S GRATITUDE FOR YOU! GIVE THE ARMY AN INCH AND IT WANTS A YARD!

I DON'T KNOW, TOSH. IT'S NOT A BAD WAY OF SPENDING A WAR -- I WAS BEGINNING TO ENJOY CRUNCH ... ROLL ON ACTION, I CAN'T WAIT TO GET BACK THERE!

EVEN WALLS HAVE EARS



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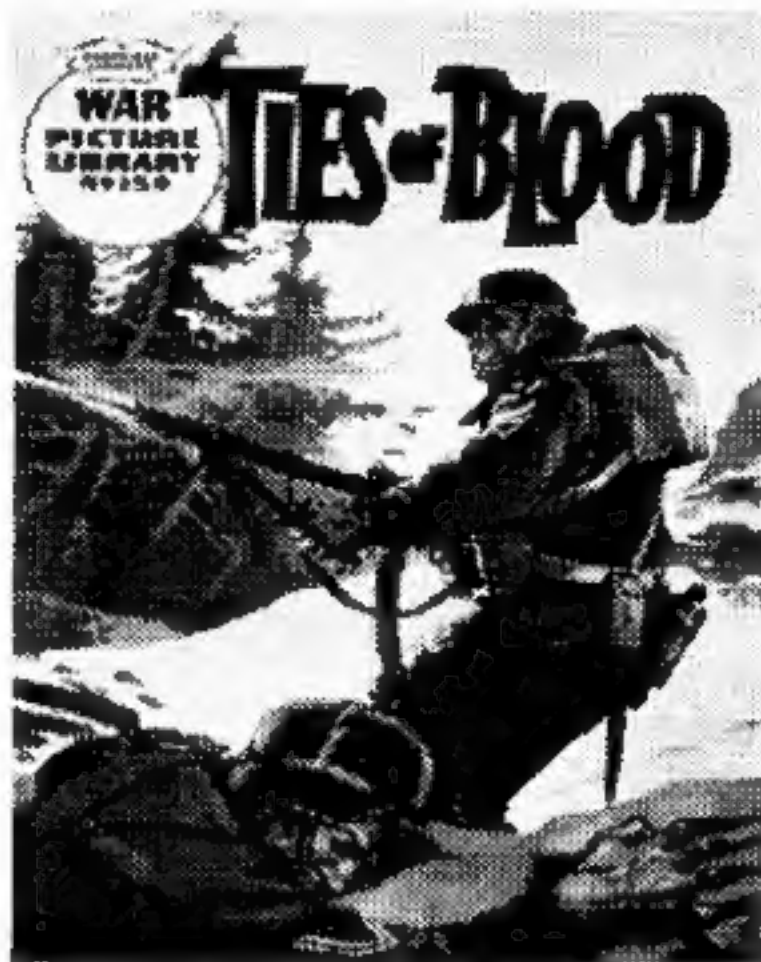
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